

Robert A. Van Kirk

Born: May 1, 1940

Died: July 30, 2018



*I've lived a life that's full
I've traveled each
and every highway
But more,
much more than this
I did it my way*

Frank Sinatra

To our Stillwater communities,

Thank you all for coming to this gathering to celebrate my dad. In anticipation of more than a few tears this evening, I would like to share my thoughts and appreciation with you in writing.

Dad's move to Oklahoma in 2014 was the beginning of a new chapter, and the support of his Stillwater communities played an important part in rediscovering his vitality. After cheating death during a lengthy hospitalization in 2015, he seemed to stumble upon some mythical Fountain of Youth. He was more clear-minded and interested in life than I'd seen in a decade.

Creating and writing a weekly newsletter at Primrose got Dad's "creative juices flowing again", and thrice weekly cranial-sacral therapy with Corleigh Cranor helped him rebuild his physical strength and regain his mental sharpness. He delighted in this, and moved on to other adventures. He began trading stocks for the first time in years, edited a doctoral dissertation and expanded the mentoring activities that he so enjoyed. He adopted a cat, a Siamese because they are talkative and "ornery", just like him. He attended driving school with the local 15-year olds, got his Oklahoma driver's license, and bought a car. All of this made it possible for him to join the Oakcreek Community in 2018, where he relished the opportunity to dive deeply into the details of investments and policies, to enjoy social and cultural events with his new neighbors, and to become their Secret T-Shirt Fairy.

A few months ago, Dad told me of driving down Husband Street feeling incredibly energized. He said, "I was driving at the speed limit, but I felt like I was flying." On behalf of my family, thank you all for helping to give us my father back for these precious years. We will always be grateful for the love and support that you gave him, and that you continue to share with me.

Melissa Van Kirk

I Walk the Line (by Johnny Cash)

I keep a close watch on this heart of mine
I keep my eyes wide open all the time
I keep the ends out for the tie that binds
Because you're mine, I walk the line

I find it very, very easy to be true
I find myself alone when each day's through
Yes, I'll admit that I'm a fool for you
Because you're mine, I walk the line

As sure as night is dark and day is light
I keep you on my mind both day and night
And happiness I've known proves that it's right
Because you're mine, I walk the line

You've got a way to keep me on your side
You give me cause for love that I can't hide
For you I know I'd even try to turn the tide
Because you're mine, I walk the line

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I keep my eyes wide open all the time
I keep the ends out for the tie that binds
Because you're mine, I walk the line